



# Tennessee Department of Children's Services Case Closure Protocol

**Supplemental to DCS Policies: 13.10, Custody Requirements for Delinquent Youth, 13.11 Trial Home Visit and Aftercare Requirements for Delinquent Youth, 13.12 Probation Requirements for Delinquent Youth, 14.16, Due Process Procedures and the Release of Information for Alleged Perpetrators of Child Abuse and Neglect, 16.12, Severe Abuse Review, 16.31 Permanency Planning for Children/Youth in the Department of Children's Services Custody, and 16.38 Face-to-Face Visitation with Dependent/Neglected/Unruly Children in DCS Custody**

## **Case Closure:**

1. When the Child and Family Team (CFTM) identifies a child/youth is ready to exit custody, a discharge CFTM is held. The discharge CANS is completed prior to the meeting and utilized in discharge planning. During this meeting the plan for the child to exit is developed. The DCS worker ensures that any ongoing services or necessary supports are in place for the child/youth to be successful following the custodial episode.
2. Juvenile Justice custody cases may transition to aftercare when the youth exits custody. For those youth, the DCS worker continues to monitor the case following the end of the custodial episode and arranges ongoing aftercare services accessible in the community and ensures necessary supports are in place for the child/youth to be successful through aftercare.
3. For probation cases, the DCS worker schedules a CFTM prior to closing a probation case to ensure needs are met and strengths and needs are discussed, and appropriate services are in place after the case is closed.
4. The DCS worker conducts and documents the required monthly face to face contacts with the child/youth during the calendar month of the case closure and prior to child/youth exiting custody.
5. The court gives permission for the child/youth to exit custody, and this is reflected in a court order. The DCS Worker provides the parent/caretaker(s) a copy of the court order and uploads the order into the electronic case record.
6. The DCS Worker provides the parent/caretaker/youth with their essential documents prior to closure. A list of those documents is listed below. The worker uploads a copy of those documents into the electronic record prior to providing the parent/caretaker/youth with the original document. If there is a need for continued use of specific documents during the closure process, then the worker mails the documents to the family's home or hand delivers the document. The DCS Worker checks the record to ensure all essential documents are accounted for prior to the discharge CFTM and make requests for any documents not already received.
7. The DCS worker reviews TFACTS for possible CPS involvement where the custodial child was substantiated for abuse and/or neglect. If the minor is substantiated, then the DCS worker provides

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notice of a Fair Hearing through the [Notice and Acknowledgement of Appeal Rights for Minor Substantiated Perpetrators](#) letter. See DCS Policy [14.16, Due Process Procedures and the Release of Information for Alleged Perpetrators of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

- ◆ To review TFACTS, conduct a Person Search using the child/youth's personal demographics and/or Person ID. If they have been substantiated a red [SP] will appear in the box with their name.
- 8. The DCS Worker provides the family with contact information for DCS should the family need assistance in the future.
- 9. The DCS Worker sends form [CS-0476, Child Welfare Benefits Determination Notification of Change of Circumstance](#) to the Child Welfare Benefits Worker within one (1) business day, and other necessary units, as appropriate.
- 10. The DCS Worker notifies all collaborating service providers using DCS form, [CS-1126, Notification to Service Provider of a DCS Case Closure](#) prior to closing all cases.

### **Case Closing Essential Documents:**

If the youth is 18 years of age upon case closure items listed in the [Independent Living and Transition Planning Guide](#) go directly to the youth. If the youth is under the age of eighteen (18) any applicable documents listed below are given to the parent/caretaker.

- List of adult relatives and other supportive adults (contained in Genogram documents) and emergency contacts, including Team Leader and Team Coordinator;
- Driver's license;
- Social Security Card (original, Copy for DCS file);
- TennCare Card: Refer to [Protocol for Continuation of TENN CARE Eligibility for Children Exiting Custody](#);
- Birth Certificate (original to client, a copy for the DCS file);
- Any legal documents, including the court order indicating the parent/caretaker(s) has custody of the child/youth;
- Updated recent medical health and mental health records and assessments, including immunization records as well as information regarding any special needs and appropriate treatment. Include the names and addresses of child/youth's Primary Care Physician, dentists, specialists and all other providers, including Mobile Crisis contact Information;
- Needed medical, dental, developmental, mental health, substance use treatment services as well as Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Speech Language Pathologist;
- List of any appointments already scheduled with pertinent details;
- Needed medication and any prescriptions, including instructions and potential side effects;
- Resume;

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- Bank account access information;
- Information regarding Advance Care Plan;
- Religious documents and information;
- Documentation of Immigration, Naturalization;
- Documentation of tribal eligibility or membership;
- Death Certificate for deceased parents;
- Life Book/ pictures/ personal items,
- Previous placement information (printed placement page from the current child welfare information system),
- Educational records including copies of report cards and the most current Individualized Education Plan (IEP); list of schools attended and grades;
- Copy of Discharge CFTM that outlines the aftercare plan and includes a written summary of the child/youth's living environments/placements, experiences and growth while separated from their family;
- State ID, dependent upon youth's age;
- Selective service number or proof of registration;
- Voter registration card.

### **Preparing the Record for Closure**

1. The DCS Worker enters the court order and ends the legal status in TFACTS within one (1) business day of the child/youth's exit from custody/supervision.
2. The DCS Worker completes any outstanding documentation and uploads any remaining documents related to the case into the electronic record.
3. The DCS Worker updates the person profile for all case members including but not limited to the address and phone number of the youth and caretaker(s).
4. The DCS Worker documents a comprehensive case closure summary in the electronic record through case recordings.
5. The DCS Worker ends case services and terminates day care, if applicable.
6. The DCS Worker completes a Transitional Survey choosing the applicable age range in the Survey Type field. The Transitional Survey is completed and approved within ten (10) business days from the child/youth's exit from custody.
7. The DCS Worker submits the family case closure to their supervisor for approval in TFACTS within ten (10) business days of closure.

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8. When children in full guardianship achieve permanency through adoption or subsidized permanent guardianship, the DCS policy and TFACTS storyboards listed below should be utilized when determining required case closure activities.
  - a) Refer to DCS Policy [15.8. Preparing Adoption Records for Archives](#).
  - b) Refer to [TFACTS Storyboard, Adoption-Entering Adoption Finalization and Case Closure](#) on the TFACTS Knowledge Base for further instructions regarding closing and restricting an adoption case in TFACTS.
  - c) Refer to [TFACTS Storyboard, Case Closure-No Adopt](#), for children in full guardianship and exit custody via Subsidized Permanent Guardianship.

**Note:** The term “DCS Worker” represents the Family Service Worker (FSW), the Juvenile Service Worker (JSW), and/or the Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO). Depending on the program area/region, there may be other DCS staff who are assigned by local leadership to complete an item within this protocol as a support to the region.